

CONVERSATION WITH KEYONNE 'KEEKS' YARDE

May Winner for the Caribbean Region



Keyonne 'Keeks' Yarde is a Barbadian stippling artist. She got her Associates Degree in Fine Arts at the Barbados Community College. Initially Keeks worked with paint, but soon discovered stippling, a technique derived from Georges Seurat's pointillism.

Through her stippling, Keyonne explores 'splash of color' themes within black and white, challenging the order of things having to be one or the other, black or white, up or down. She is exploring this juxtaposition with this new technique whilst finding ways to add her 'sunshine' to every piece personal to her.

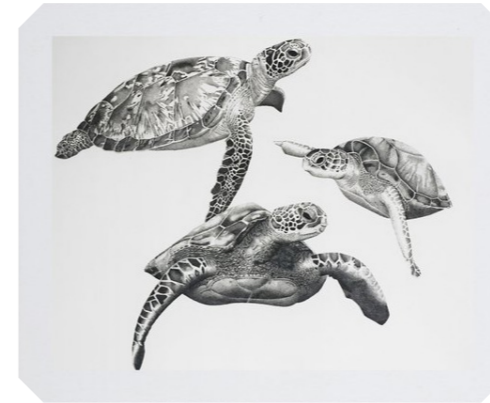
On their journey to arts



I am a 26 year old Bajan who grew up in Barbados as an inside kid. Meaning, you wouldn't find me outside playing and interacting with the neighborhood kids. As a result I had to find alternative ways to entertain myself and those were reading and drawing.

As time went on I started to see where Art could grow. My aunt was a big inspiration in my early days as she also held an interest in drawing. I used to see her work and say to myself, "I want to be that good" and with hard work, determination and the right support system I achieved it. I have been blessed with a support system that has pushed me to the point that I am at today, a full time artist for the first time in my life.

On personal education, and creative education viewed locally and globally



I attended my local community college where I received my Associates degree in Art but have been self-teaching ever since then. I think my country still has room to improve in the creative education sector. The arts are not as valued here as they appear overseas. Unfortunately, I don't know if I am able to comment on the world as I do not have any firsthand experience with it.

I don't like the idea of putting art into a box, there is so much out there – both in reality and in artists' minds, so I think they are literally ENDLESS possibilities. There are definitely no confines whatsoever.

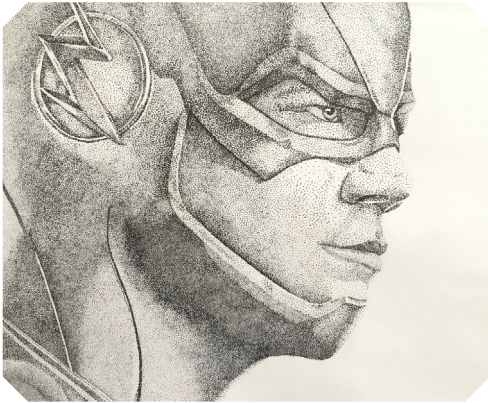
On Art as a representation of reality or escape from it

Online galleries and marketing artwork online



I have only recently been trying to get into online galleries, so I have no experience yet, but I'm hoping that changes by the year end. I mainly sell stickers, pins and keyrings of my art, but I will be releasing some professional quality prints over the next few weeks, so fingers crossed it goes well! I wish I could answer that, but it's still a relatively new market for me. I would say that popularity and views are very essential to online artists. As more people share an artist's work, popularity and interest is gained, thus helping artists earn a living from selling their art.

On cultural ethnic and national identity reflected in art



My art represents me and what goes on in my mind. I admit that I don't focus much on my culture in my art but, nevertheless, some of my pieces are inspired by it. There are so many local artists that focus on our culture, however, I want to make something different, more me. Culture is very important, that is a fact, but internal battles are what I'm inspired by. I discovered the stippling technique years ago, and since then I have been working on bringing that into my country as a new norm. Maybe eventually it would become more traditional.

On whether locality is important

Yes, it is. Artists share different perspectives with people. Where you come from will always be an important part of the story, whether it's a part that's shared or not.

